

News

MART-JAN &
TALITHA
JOY, MICHA
AND AMY

Our help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.
Psalm 121



Yes, it's about time for a good update...

...because we are living in Phnom Penh for almost half a year! As they say: time flies. We start having our first little conversations and do feel more and more 'at home'. But, of course, we also struggle a lot. Okay, a lot to tell and we happily use this opportunity to take you along for a trip into some of our day-to-day stories...

Yesterday afternoon, just before mealtime, I stood on our balcony with Amy. We were looking at the traffic, the always continuing busyness, the works in progress in our street. There is enough to see to captivate us for the next times to come. After I stood there for some time I looked up and saw the moon. To be honest, it was quite a time ago since I had taken the time to look up. But the moon was still there, solid as ever, unshakable. It reminded me on

this verse from the Bible: **"Thus says the LORD "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool"** (Isaiah 66:1). Verses like these help me to see things in the right perspective. Our God is the Creator and this earth is from His perspective a footstool. Our God is great and marvellous, and in the same time He is with Us (Immanuel), He is involved in our lives and He loves us dearly.

Such a simple moment on the balcony of our house helps me to keep the right perspective in the normal life of everyday, or to be honest, it's still not that normal. It helps me to look up to Jesus, to see my problems from His viewpoint and perspective. Things are not out of His control and He invites me to live my life for Him. That gives relaxation...

I have been amazed lately that the writes of the Psalms also have this perspective, even though it's far from

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easy. They often start with their problems but end up singing praises to God. I would like to practice this same pattern. Let our lives be full of praises for our God!

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This News is sent out about 4 times a year in order to inform you well about the things that are happening in our lives and enables you to pray with us. Feel free to forward this letter to others.



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LANGUAGE STUDY

The time in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, is marked by the language and culture study. A tough job! We knew of course that the language is totally different and that it would be difficult, but it's something else to experience it in 'real-life'. The good news: we both enjoy it and are making good progress!

Mart-Jan is studying at [G2K](#), a new language school here in Phnom Penh and Talitha is studying at [LINK](#) (the movies give a pretty nice impression!). The reason for studying at two different schools is that we did not have a house helper and therefore could not leave our home at the same time. We do have a house helper now, and from January onwards we hope to study together at G2K. We're are truly looking forward to that!

At the language school we learn all the new sounds of the Khmer and how and where you make all these sounds. Furthermore we learn standard sentences and work through a lot of vocal each day. Once we come home from the language school we have to

continue learning because the words we learn today are needed for the lessons of tomorrow.

We enjoy the little conversations that we can have now. We are able to get a bit more connected to the neighbours, and we are able to understand them a bit more. We do have, for example, a nice connection with our "tuk-tuk" driver Heng, and we try to connect more and more to our neighbour. She would love it to talk for a long time, but that's to soon now: we do not understand... She enjoys the kids and especially Amy is favourite. Once in a while we share some of our food and, most of the time, we get something Cambodian in return. Last week we received 40 bananas, but what do you do with so many of them?;-)

Another thing that is great to tell is that we do have a fantastic house helper now. Her name is Sak, she is a Christian woman who loves children very much. It's great to see that. We see that she is a great help for us in all the daily work. She also seems to enjoy being with us, so the 'click' is there. Of course we also have to get used to the fact of having someone in our house for quite some time. Sak comes 5 mornings a week, cooks the meal (Khmer or sometimes Chinese dishes), joins in eating it and leaves just after lunchtime. We enjoy her cooking and use the meals to practice our language. Sak enjoys to learn us new words and to correct us on our grammar and structure. It all helps, also to get to know each other better. Through contacts like these we see of what importance language is!

HOMESCHOOLING JOY & MICHA

Another big amount of our time is spent on the homeschooling of the kids. We still do this together. We do enjoy it, but we also feel that it is an enormous job. We are the parents, but also their teachers, we have a little baby and, last but far from least, we are in the process of adapting to all the 'new' here. That's heavy, but with such a small class you can be very flexible. Joy and Micha do very well! They do enjoy their 'studies', and for them it is real school.

On the other hand, they do miss their friends from school in Holland. We see how important the network that we have in Holland is! What a blessing to have such a network, however, here in Cambodia we have to build it all up again. We have found some shops in Phnom Penh where we can buy stuff

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for the schooling. Before we came we didn't know what we could get here but besides some specific stuff we are able to have all we need. We also found a very nice pool where we can have the gym-lessons, every now and then we join them in their lessons;-)

Did you know that you can also throw snowballs here in Phnom Penh...?

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'OUR' CHURCH

Some time ago we have made and shared some pictures of 'our' church so that you can have bit of an impression. Via [this link](#) you can find them on our website.



Here in Phnom Penh we attend a local, Khmer speaking church, mainly attended by students and some families. The believers are mostly first-generation believers, what means that their parents or others that took care of them did not believe in Jezus Christ. They did not have their example, and have to find out for themselves, in the Bible, what it is to live with and for Christ. We see that the Church very much wants to show others what they found in Jesus. They're very outward focussed so to say. Right now the preparations for Christmas are made. We hope are pray that through the Christmas services people will see who Christ is and put their trust in Him. Do you join us in this prayer?

We are thankful for the contact that we can have in the Church. Mart-Jan enjoys the sharing of God's word every now and then and would like to build the believers up and encourage them. It's also good to get in contact with the culture more in this way.

HOW ARE WE GETTING ON?

We find it a bit difficult to write this part. There is so much to be thankful for, but we do struggle a lot as well. We don't want to complain, but many of you ask us how we really are doing so we try to give you a honest insight in our lives here...

We are thankful that we are in Cambodia and we see that living here is an experience wherein the Lord is shaping us enormous. As a family we grow closer. We learn to enjoy things and we learn to deal with all the 'different' things (so often things are different than told), cry together over the things that are difficult, and find out how things are done here. We are very

thankful for two Dutch families that we got to know and every now and then we go out together. It's also a good opportunity to reflect with them, they know the Dutch culture and have been here a while. Slowly but steadily we are building up a network again. We see that it is very difficult for Joy and Micha to build up friendships. In the street where we live there aren't so much kids, and the children that live here go to Cambodian (pre-)schools. There is also not a safe place in our street for the kids to play outside. We are very thankful that they have each other, but after half a year it would be good to have friendships besides each other.

Amy is doing good! She grows so fast, is energetic, starts to 'talk', and let's us know what she wants. But she is very attached to us, when other pick her up...

So what's the difficult part..? Besides the 'normal' living here, that is very intensive already (and will be intensive for a year or so, and that is okay), we have a lot of extra things that are out of our control. We face some difficult things in the family back in Holland, difficult things in our own family here, and difficult things among our friends. We have to learn to deal with it from here. We look up to Jesus Who is the same wherever we are! Besides those things there is sometimes being sick and that uses a lot of our energy, the continuous noise of the street here (to us it is terrible), and the major differences between the Cambodian / Asian and western culture. It's just so much and we need to learn how to deal with that.

Sometimes we have the impression that we do not have many 'normal' days to 'recover' a bit and have enough rest and relaxation. At some days we are surviving and that is, we believe, not the right thing. Yes, we struggle. We do evaluate on a frequent basis and adapt our plans and rhythm to these evaluations. We would like to keep the right balance. We also want to stick to certain key 'values' that we treasure, and that we believe are of great importance.

We pray for wisdom to deal with all these things. One of the lessons that we are learning now is to depend on the Lord more and more. We believe that overall it is getting better, but experience this process as very intensive.

GIVE THANKS:

1. that we do enjoy a good nights sleep! It's way better than last newsletter.
2. that we could make a good start with the homeschooling. Joy and Micha, but we as well, enjoy the time that we can spent together.
3. that we start to pick up the Khmer well.
4. for all the things that are going well! We wou like to keep that in mind all the time.
5. that (grand)ma and (uncle) René are coming during the Christmas break. We are looking forward to it.

PRAY:

1. that our relation with our Lord Jesus will flourish and be very alive. Satan surely attacks us here.
2. for energy, strength, a good health, wisdom and a good nights rest.
3. for Micha. He does have, for various reasons, a very difficult time now. We've had the worst (hopefully), but prayer is needed!
4. for friendships for the kids.
5. that we will keep the right focus and perspective. Pray that we will keep in mind where we are here for.
6. pray for the contacts that we have with Sak, Heng and 'Ming' (= aunt), our neighbour.
7. pray for the contacts in the local church. Pray that friendships may develop. Pray that the preaching of Mart-Jan will bless the believers.

We want to close with a word of thanks for all your prayers, gifts, cards, mails, and whatever. It is a true blessing!

Warm greetings from all the 5 of us!



KIDS 2 KIDS

On our website we have made a specific part **for kids!** Last week we have placed some drawings and some video's there.

Joy also made a video of one of her favorite books! So if you want to practice your Dutch take a look at the website via [this link](#). Enjoy!



IMPORTANT NOTE about sending POST to Cambodia.
Postcards, letters, nice magazines and more do arrive (generally speaking) in good order in our post box.
When you want to send something else it's best to send as an 'insured' package. We have found out that the packages do not arrive when some people have the idea it contains something more valuable than paper...
We try to let you know when we have received a card, letter or whatever. When you did not hear anything we are still busy writing you an email ;-), or the post is still on it's way.



We took a tour at the Mekong river during the 'autumn' break...

